The Effect of Wisdom on the Academic Performance of College Students

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Abstract

The current study finds out the gender differences with reference to wisdom and its three domains. 495 2nd year students from 6 colleges of district Skardu were selected as a sample of the study by using the stratified sampling technique. The findings of the study revealed that students' wisdom level fell at moderate range and wisdom affected positively their academic achievements. Moreover, female students are wiser than male students, but there is no significant difference between them regarding the reflective domain of wisdom. As the result of this study, it is recommended that teachers should develop reflective, creative, and critical thinking abilities of the students in order to enhance their wisdom level. It is also suggested that different curricular and co-curricular activities that provide students opportunities to decide, chose, reflect and evaluate themselves may be included in the college syllabus.

Key Words*:* Explore, Effect, Dimensions of wisdom, Academic, Performance, Students.

Introduction

Wisdom has been under-discussed across the cultures and history in both the East and West . It is considered one of the more controversial and important topics in education, philosophy, and psychology. Scholars, philosophers, and educationists have different views about wisdom, its limitation, definition, application, and development. According to the American Nursing Association (2015), wisdom is an ability of a person to use knowledge in order to manage and solve the problems appropriately and effectively.[1]

The word wisdom is not the newest in educational phenomenon; rather it has a long history, as it history goes back to times of Greek philosophers: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

In all Divine religions, wisdom has significant importance. According to Islam, Allah Almighty created man and taught him wisdom through the Apostles. As Allah says in the Holy Quran: "Certainly Allah conferred a benefit upon the believers when He raised among them an Apostle from among themselves, reciting to them His communications and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the wisdom, although before that they were surely in manifest error".[2]

Philosophical Perspectives of Wisdom

Plato defined wisdom as the knowledge and awareness about the good within all that exists.[3] While Aristotle defined wisdom in a different way, he perceived wisdom as the knowledge about the first principle and cause that exists behind the things' existence.[4]

Here, both definitions are very different from each other, because Plato defined wisdom as the knowledge about the good, whereas, Aristotle defined as the knowledge about the first cause that governs the universe.

Furthermore, Aristotle classified wisdom into five categories or states of mind and each category or state of mind has different functions. The first state of mind is "episteme" that means scientific knowledge, which is based on observations, experiments and other senses' knowledge. The second one is called "theoretikes". It means

theoretical knowledge of a person, but this theoretical knowledge does not include all types of knowledge, rather it is devoted to the knowledge about the truth.

The third state of mind is called “techne”. It means the competencies and abilities of a person needed to achieve and accomplish professional success, (it is called technical skills). And the fourth one is called “phronesis”. It means a practical wisdom of a person that leads towards ethical actions, which define common good and the last state of mind is called “Sophia”. Sophia is related with the truth which leads toward a practical end.[5]

Generally talking about wisdom, we can divide modern philosophers into two major groups; those who accept the wisdom and other abstract themes as realities such as rationalism, idealism and those who deny the existence of wisdom. Rene Descartes (who is known as a father of modern philosophy and was a pioneer of “Cartesianism or Continental Rationalism”) believes wisdom as a true knowledge and true knowledge is self-evidently knowledge that cannot be rejected.

Descartes further explained that true knowledge can be gained only through techniques without fear of deception; intuition and induction. Here, intuition means the type of knowledge that is cleared and oblivious to the faculty of logic and reason and induction means specific to general or making a generalized conclusion from particulars or deriving additional knowledge about truth logically from the known truth.

George Berkeley a well-known Irish philosopher (who is called the originator of the philosophy “Immaterialism” or subjective idealism) agreed with Rene Descartes’ views about wisdom and gave reason to support him by saying that the knowledge about God is the empirical knowledge, and all other types of knowledge are derived from this basic source. The universe is made by God and all wisdom comes from God. David Hume and Immanuel Kant believed that wisdom is an opinion or perhaps an object that an individual possesses, it is not state nor action.[6]

Psychological Perspectives of Wisdom

Psychologists like philosophers have different views on wisdom. Some psychologists believe that wisdom is the combination and integration of three essential components; knowledge, life's experiences and deep understanding as well as wisdom integrates tolerance, patience, and stability in life's uncertainty and its upheavals. They also believe that only knowledge is not enough to be a wise person, rather experience should be with knowledge, and this experience must be gained through conducting researches to look into the emotional, social and cognitive processes that transfer experience into wisdom(www.psychologytoday.com)

According to Baltes and Staudinger (1996), wisdom cannot be defined, because there is no such kind of specific criteria that define wisdom, rather wisdom is known, and attributed by people consensus on anything,[7] but Alieda Assmann defined wisdom as the validated behaviors, attitudes, and action. According to Clayton, "wisdom is the ability of an individual to control human nature that manages the rules and principles of change, paradox, and contradiction".[8]

Types of Wisdom

Psychology classifies wisdom into two major categories; the general wisdom and the personal wisdom.[9] Personal wisdom is generally based on personality development and personality research, and personal wisdom describes the endpoint of personality or mature personality of a person.[10] Wisdom from this point of view clearly close link to research on coping from others and learning from the traumatic incidents and events, post-traumatic development and growth of an individual (Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004), while general wisdom generally has a strong connection with expertise approaches research and deep study of wisdom as well as the literature of historical wisdom. [11]

In philosophical perspective, there is clear distinction between personal and general wisdom, because personal wisdom is related to the first person ontology (the branch of metaphysics that deals

with the nature of being and existence) and the general wisdom is a completely third-person ontology. In first-person ontology, a person becomes an observer of his or her action and this observation indicates insight that is based on self-experience. It is different from the third person ontology about an individual because, in this type of ontology, the third person observes the person's life and makes views about the person being observed. His perspective of life may be different from the first person perspective about him or herself. This third person perspective about others is called general wisdom. In general wisdom, the person his or her own views, perceptions, insights are not directly concerned (Searle, 1992).

Here, it necessary to be highlighted that the essential nature of man's existence, its consequences for life planning, life management, and life review are not neglected and ignored in personal wisdom, rather these are the important part both general and personal wisdom.[12] Although, personal and general wisdom differ to some extent, but both of them are interlinked and correlated in overall wisdom development. A balanced person needs to be wise in knowing his own life as well as knowing other people.

An individual may be wise with regard to other people, as he or she cares of other's life and resolves other problems, but at the same time, he or she may not be a wise person with regard his or her own life. Likewise, those individuals who are perceived to be wise may have insight about specific circumstances and may not be able to think about the problems of life beyond their circumstances or they may not be able to advice given capability. If we study and research on the wise person, we expect and find that those individuals who have both types of wisdom at a high level are rarely seen.[13]

There is another confusing concept in the wisdom that is what does mean by wisdom as a judgment and wisdom as an action. Some scholars think that personal and general wisdoms are the same as wisdom by judgment and wisdom by action. This is a misconception, and it should be avoided from committing such kind of misunderstanding because there is a clear distinction between both

concepts. Wisdom as judgment is more common as compared to wisdom as action and researches mostly focused on wisdom as judgment, and only few numbers of researches have been conducted on wisdom as action.[14]

Wisdom as an action is the part of both personal and general wisdom. In general wisdom, action means to advise others to solve their life problems and action in personal wisdom regards with the life planning, life management and coping others in one's life.

The one most important feature and an element of general wisdom is action wisdom, which is related to advice giving to others.[15] From this description, it can be concluded that wisdom as an action does not refer to the only personal wisdom, nor wisdom as judgment refers to general wisdom, rather both types of wisdom may investigate the action and well as judgment.

Personal wisdom can be differentiated from the general wisdom, as the personal wisdom is mostly assessed and measured by the self-report and general wisdom mostly is measured and assessed by performance-based scales.[16] The general wisdom refers to expertise in the fundamental pragmatics of life and it includes sound judgment and deep insight about the individual's ways of life planning, life management and understanding of an excellent life. The word expertise illustrates that wisdom usually acquired through more practices and experiences in life; therefore it is distinguishing and differentiating body of skills and insights.

There are five criteria that are used to describe the term "expertise in fundamental pragmatics of life". The first criterion is called "rich factual knowledge". It refers the type of knowledge that is related with social norms, interpersonal relations, life sprain development, human nature, variations in planning and development processes and outcomes. The second criterion is called "Rich procedural knowledge". It refers to the knowledge about the heuristics (how to solve other's problems and how to give advice ethers) strategies.

The third criterion is called "lifespan conceptualism". It relates with the knowledge about the life's problems and their solutions, for

instance: family, friends, education, work, leisure, and social services problems and their solutions, as well as their interrelations with times.

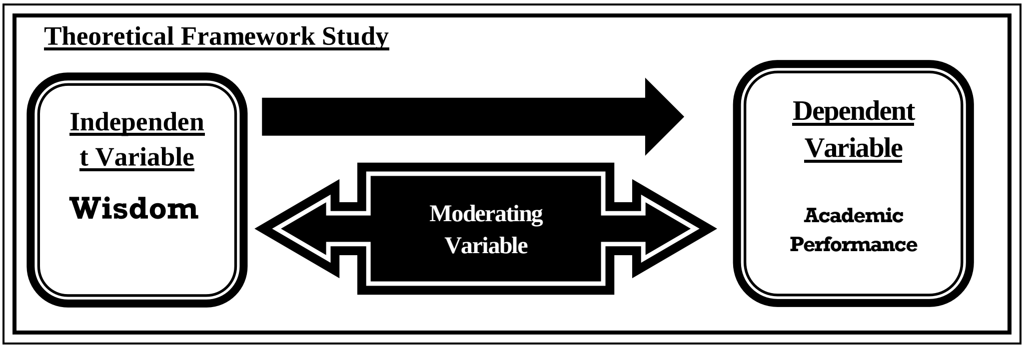
The fourth criterion is known as "life priorities and Relativism of values". In this world, man has limited time and resources as compared to his needs, desires, and ambitions, therefore, it is very difficult to do what he wants to do, and to acquire what he wants to gain, as a result, he needs to make life's priorities. Similarly, he and she must also know, accept, and tolerate individual differences, their priorities, preferences, and values. At the same time, he and she should be balanced in optimizing individual and the common good.

The last criterion is called "recognition and management of uncertainty".

It is perceived that due to limited knowledge, awareness and experiences human beings do not make sound, best and perfect decisions in future and also cannot predict the future. A wise person always keeps himself aware of about the life uncertainty and makes options and manages ways to face the uncertainty and life challenges.[17]

Theoretical Framework of the Study

The current study is based on the three domains of wisdom developed by Dr. Ardelt. The cognitive, reflective and affective domains of wisdom. The first domain (the cognitive wisdom) measures how an individual understands him/herself, the second domain of wisdom (the affective wisdom) examines that how an individual reflects on the gained knowledge and how he or she perceives the events of life from different perspective and the third domain (the affective wisdom) assess an individual how he or she compassionates and sympathy for others and how he or she serves for others' welfares. This theory has been applied on the study to understand and analyze the academic effects of 3D wisdom on the performance of students.



Statement of the Problem

There are many factors that affect the students' performance, such as teachers, friends, educational institution, parents and students' own wisdom and intelligence. Different types of researches have been conducted to investigate the effect of the above-mentioned factors. The current research study was aimed at investigating the effect of wisdom on the academic performance of college students.

Objectives of the Study

1) To assess the level of three domains of wisdom of college students
2) To determine the effect of overall wisdom on the academic performance of college students.
3) To explore the effect of cognitive, affective and reflective wisdom on the academic performance of college students.
4) To identify the significant difference between male and female college students regarding three dimensions of wisdom.

Hypotheses of the Study

H_{o1}: Wisdom and its three domains have no significant effect on the academic performance of the college students.

H_{o2}: A significant difference does not exist between male and female students regarding the wisdom and its three domains.

Methods and Procedures

The method of the study was quantitative. The following methodologies and procedures were adopted for data collection, analysis, and interpretation:

Population and Sampling

The population of this research study constituted all males and female students studying in the second year at public and private colleges of District Skardu, Gilgit Baltistan. Three boys and three girls' colleges were selected for the purpose of this research study. Stratified sampling technique was used. Data were collected from 495 students, out of them, 268 students were males and 227 students were females.

Research Instruments

For the measurement of students' cognitive, reflective and affective domains of wisdom and academic performance of college students two types of instruments were used i.e., 3D Wisdom scales and students' first-year annual results. 3D Wisdom scales were developed by Monica Ardelt, and it consisted of 38 items. 13 items measure cognitive wisdom, 12 items measure reflective wisdom and 13 items measure affective wisdom.

Data Analysis

The different statistical tests such as the mean, Linear Regression, and Independent Sample t-test were applied for data tabulation, analysis, and interpretation.

Table 1: ***College Students' 3Dimensions Wisdom Level***

Cognitive	*Reflective*	*Affective*
3.50	3.96	3.05

This table describes the students' levels of 3 domains of wisdom. It reveals the students 'levels fall in the moderate range. It is understood from this table that students' mean score on reflective wisdom is higher than cognitive wisdom and affective wisdom. The students' affective wisdom mean score is less than the cognitive and reflective.

Table 2: ***Wisdom effect on the Academic Performance (N: 495)***

R Square	B (Coefficients)	*T*	*F*	Sig.
.048	.221	5.41	45.0	.00

a. Predictors: (Constant), Wisdom
b. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

Table 2 describes the effect of wisdom on the academic performance of college students. It reveals R2 value is .048 that means our independent variable (wisdom) explains 4.80 % difference in academic performance and the rest of it due to some other factors. Beta (β) value found β.221that reveals that a unit increase in the independent variable, will cause to increase of .221units in the dependent variable. P value found .00, which is less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$) at 95% confidence level. So, our null hypothesis Ho1 that there wisdom does not have any significant effect on the academic performance of college students is rejected, and it is concluded that there is a significant effect of wisdom on the academic performance of college students.

Table 3

The Effect of Cognitive Wisdom on the Academic Performance of College Students (N: 495)

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	R Square	B (Coefficients)	*T*	*F*	Sig.
Cognitive Wisdom	Academic Performance	.054	.233	7.17	51.54	.00

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cognitive Wisdom
b. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

Table 3 represents the effect of cognitive wisdom on the academic performance of college students. It shows R2 value is .054, which highlights that our independent variable (cognitive wisdom) explains 5.40 % variance in our dependent variable (academic performance). Beta (β) value is .233, which describes that a unit increase in independent variable will bring a positive change of .233 units in the dependent variable. It is evident from this table that t value is 7.17, which is statistically significant. P value is 0.00, which less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$) at 95% confidence level. It is concluded that a positive and significant effect of cognitive wisdom on the academic performance of colleges students.

Table 4

The Effect of Reflective Wisdom on the Academic Performance of College Students (N: 495)

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	R Square	B (Coefficients)	*T*	*F*	Sig.
Reflective Wisdom	Academic Performance	.043	.207	6.33	40.18	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Reflective Wisdom
b. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

Table 4 points out the effect of the reflective domain of wisdom on the academic performance of college students. It shows R2 value is .043, which explains that 4.30 % variation in our dependent variable (academic Performance) can be explained by the independent variable (reflective wisdom), and other variation due to some other factors. Beta (β) value is .207 which portrays that a unit increase in our independent variable will bring a positive change of .207 units in the dependent variable. It is evident from this table that t value is 6.33, which is statistically significant. P value is.001 which is less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$) at 95% confidence level. So, it is concluded that reflective wisdom has a positive and significant effect on the academic performance of college students.

Table 5

The Effect of Affective Wisdom on the Academic Performance of College Students (N: 495)

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	R Square	B (Coefficients)	*T*	*F*	Sig.
Affective Wisdom	Academic Performance	.030	.172	5.23	27.37	.00

a. Predictors: (Constant), Affective Wisdom
b. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

Table 5 describes the effect of affective wisdom on the academic performance of college students. It shows R2 value is .030. It means that our independent variable (affective wisdom) indicates a 3.00 % variance in our dependent variable (academic Performance) while the rest is due to some other factors. Beta (β) value is .172, which illustrates that a unit increase in our independent variable (Affective wisdom) approximately increase .172 units in the dependent variable (Academic Performance). It is evident from this table that t value is 5.23, which is statistically significant. P value is .00, which is less than 0.05 ($p<0.05$) at 95% confidence level. Therefore, it is concluded that affective wisdom has a positive and significant effect on the academic performance of college students.

Table 6
Gender Differences with Reference to Cognitive Wisdom. (No: 495)

Variable	Gender	*N*	Mean	*Df*	t-value	Sig.
Wisdom	Male	267	40.94	493	-2.48	.005
	Female	228	42.64			

P≤ 0.05

Table 6 depicts the result of a significant difference between male and female college students' responses to cognitive wisdom. Independent sample t-test was used to find out a significant difference between male and female college students' responses to cognitive wisdom. It shows that male college students mean score is 40.94, while female college students mean score is 42.64. P value was found .005, which is less than.05 ($p < .05$); it means that there is a significant difference in cognitive wisdom between male and female college students. The result illustrates that students of both genders responded in different ways. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in cognitive wisdom between male and female college students.

Table 7

Gender Differences with Reference to Affective Wisdom. (No: 495)

Variable	Gender	*N*	Mean	*Df*	t-value	Sig.
Wisdom	Male	267	41.80	493	-2.45	.015
	Female	228	43.20			

P≤ 0.05

Table 7 reveals the result of male and female college students' responses on affective wisdom. Independent sample t-test was used to find out a significant difference between male and female college students' responses on affective wisdom. It shows that male college students' mean score is 41.80, while female college students' mean score is 43.20. P value was found .015, which is fewer than.05 ($p < .05$); it means that there is a significant difference in affective wisdom between male and female college students. The result illustrates that students of both genders responded in different ways. Hence, our null hypothesis Ho7 that there is no significant difference between male and female college students regarding affective wisdom is rejected at 5% confidence level. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in affective wisdom between male and female college students.

Table 8

Gender difference with Reference to Reflective Wisdom. (No: 495)

Variable	Gender	*N*	Mean	*Df*	t-value	Sig.
Wisdom	Male	267	33.77	493	-1.395	.164
	Female	228	34.37			

P≤ 0.05

Table 8 depicts the result of a significant difference between male and female college students' responses to reflective wisdom. Independent sample t-test was used to find out the significant difference between male and female college students' responses to wisdom. It shows that male college students mean score is 33.77, while female college students mean score is 34.37. P value was found .164, which is greater than.05 ($p > .05$). Hence, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female college students regarding reflective wisdom is accepted at 5% confidence level.

Discussion

There are a few numbers of research studies that examined the effect of wisdom on the academic performance of college students. The findings of the current study revealed that wisdom had a positive and significant effect on the academic performance of college students. This finding supported the previous research findings by Michael Maeir (2008), he found a positive effect of wisdom on the higher GPA and academic skill.[18]

The findings of the present study are consistent with the previous study conducted by Staudinger, Ursula, Baltes, and Paul (1996).[19] They found a positive but weak relationship between wisdom and wisdom related performance. The findings of the present study are also consistent with the findings by Vimple and Sawhney's study (2017[20]) titled "relationship between academic achievement and successful intelligence of adolescents".

The results of the current study disconfirmed the results of the study conducted by Derek Cavilla (2017), he found an insignificant relationship between wisdom and academic achievements of students.[21] These differences may be due to a geographical, cultural, religious and demographical difference. The findings of the current study also declared that gender differences existed regarding the cognitive and affective domain of wisdom. On contrary to a common concept, this study found that female students had higher mean scores on the cognitive and affective wisdom than male students. The findings of the study consistent

with findings of previous studies conducted by findings by Rukhsana, Khan, Mussarat and Ayesha (2015)[22], and findings by Gluck, and Bluck, (2009), and findings by Ardelt, (2009)[23]. The findings of the current study disconfirmed the findings by Leveson (2005) and Webster (2003) that they did not find any significant difference between men and women regarding wisdom.[24]

Conclusion

On the basis of research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that students' levels of the cognitive, reflective and affective domains of wisdom fell in a moderate range. The results of the present study reported that wisdom, and its three domains; the cognitive, reflective and affective wisdom positively and significantly affected the academic performance of college students and with the increase in wisdom level, the academic performance level increases accordingly.

The findings of the current study also declared that differences existed between male and female students regarding cognitive and affective domains of wisdom and female students got higher means scores as compared to male students on the cognitive and affective domains of wisdom, but there was not found any significant difference between male and female students regarding the affective domain of wisdom.

Wisdom is the most desirable characteristic of human beings and it has a positive effect on human life. The students' performance was also affected by wisdom. So, the following recommendations may be put forwarded.

1) Reflection plays a vital role in wisdom development; therefore, the teachers may increase the students' level of wisdom in order to enhance the academic performance of the students, especially the male students need a considerable attention to increase the wisdom level.
2) Knowledge and experiences are very fundamental elements that make the students wise persons, therefore, the teachers and

parents may help students how to gain maximum knowledge and more experiences from their own lives and from others' lives.

3) Blind imitation leads to foolishness, while rationale and logic lead towards wisdom, therefore, the teachers may teach and train their students how to avoid to be blind imitators and how to be rationales in their lives.

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